

THE MINERVA.

GET WISDOM, AND WITH ALL THY GETTING, GET UNDERSTANDING.—PROVERBS OF SOLOMON.

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VOL. I.

POPULAR TALES.

FROM THE FRENCH, GERMAN, ITALIAN,
SPANISH, AND ENGLISH.

Truth severe, by fiction drest.—GRAY.

CHRISTIAN WOLF.

A True Story.—From the German.

Christian Wolf was the son of an inn-keeper at Bielsdorf, who, after the death of his father, continued till his twentieth year, to assist his mother in the management of the house. The inn was a poor one, and Wolf had many idle hours. Even before he left school, he was regarded as an idle loose lad; the girls complained of his rudeness, and the boys, when detected in any mischief, were sure to give up him as the ringleader. Nature had neglected his person. His figure was small and unpromising; his hair was of a coarse greasy black; his nose was flat; and his upper lip, originally too thick, and twisted aside by a kick from a horse, was such as to disgust the women, and furnish a perpetual subject of jesting to the men. The contempt showered upon his person was the first thing which wounded his pride, and turned a portion of his blood to gall.

He was resolved to gain what was every where denied him; his passions were strong enough; and he soon persuaded himself that he was in love. The girl he selected treated him coldly, and he had reason to fear that his rivals were happier than himself. Yet the maiden was poor; and what was refused to his vows might perhaps be granted to his gifts; but he was himself needy, and his vanity soon threw away the little he gained from his share in the profits of the Sun. Too idle and too ignorant to think of supporting his extravagance by speculation; too proud to descend from Mine Host into a plain peasant, he saw only one way to escape from his difficulties—a way to which thousands before and after him have had recourse—theft. Bielsdorf is situated on the edge of the forest; Wolf commenced a deer-stealer, and poured the gains of his boldness into the lap of his mistress.

Among Hannah's lovers, was one of the constable's men, Robert Horn. This man soon observed the advantage which Wolf had gained over her, by means of his presents, and set himself to detect the source of so much liberality. He began to frequent the Sun; he drank there early and late; and sharpened as his eyes were both by jealousy and poverty, it was not long before he discovered whence all the money came. Not many months before this time, a severe edict had been published against all trespassers on the forest laws. Horn was indefatigable in watching the secret motions of his rival, and at last he was so fortunate as to detect him in the very fact. Wolf was tried, and found guilty; and the fine which he paid in order to avoid the statutory punishment amounted to the sum-total of his property.

Horn triumphed. His rival was driven from the field, for Hannah had no notion of a beggar for a lover. Wolf well knew his enemy, and he knew that his enemy was in the happy possession of his Hannah. Pride, jealousy, rage, were all in arms within him; hunger set the wide

world before him, but passion and revenge held him fast at Bielsdorf. A second time he became a deer-stealer, and a second time by the redoubled vigilance of Robert Horn, was he detected in the trespass.—

This time he experienced the full severity of the law; he had no money to pay a fine, and was sent straightway to the house of chastisement.

The year of punishment drew near its close, and found his passion increased by absence, his confidence buoyant under all the pressure of his calamities. The moment his freedom was given to him, he hastened to Bielsdorf, to throw himself at the feet of Hannah. He appears, and is avoided by every one. The force of necessity at last humbles his pride, and overcomes his delicacy. He begs from the wealthy of the place; he offers himself as a day-labourer to the farmers, but they despise his slim figure, and do not stop for a moment to compare him with his sturdier competitors. He makes a last attempt. One situation is yet vacant—the last of honest occupations. He offers himself as herdsman of the swine upon the town's common; but even here he is rejected; no man will trust any thing to the jail-bird. Meeting with contempt from every eye, chased with scorn from one door to another, he becomes yet the third time the deer-stealer, and for the third time his unhappy star places him in the power of his enemy.

This double backsliding goes against him at the judgment-seat; for every judge can look into the book of the law, but few into the soul of the culprit. The forest edict requires an exemplary punishment, and Wolf is condemned to be branded on the back with the mark of the gallows, and to three years hard labour in the fortress.

This period also went by, and he once more dropt his chains; but he was no longer the same man that entered the fortress. Here began a new epoch in the life of Wolf. You shall guess the state of his mind from his own words to his confessor:—

"I went into the fortress," said he, "an offender, but I came out of it a villain. I had still had something in the world that was dear to me, and my pride had not totally sunk under my shame.—But here I was thrown into the company of three and twenty convicts; of these, two were murderers,* the rest were all notorious thieves and vagabonds. They jeered at me if I spake of God; they taught me to utter blasphemies against the Redeemer. They sung songs whose atrocity at first horrified me, but which I, a shame-faced fool, soon learned to echo. No day passed over, wherein I did not hear the recital of some profligate life, the triumphant history of some rascal, the concoction of some audacious villainy.

At first I avoided as much as I could these men, and their discourses. But my labour was hard and tyrannical, and in my hours of repose I could not bear to be left alone, without one face to look upon.—The jailers had refused me the company of my dog, so I needed that of men, and for this I was obliged to pay by the sacrifice of some parts of Germany, no man can suffer the last severity of the law, unless he confess his guilt. The clearest evidence is not received as an equivalent. Even murderers have right to this indulgence, if indeed (considering what they suffer in lieu of immediate death) indulgence it may be called.

of whatever good there remained within me. By degrees I grew accustomed to every thing—and in the last quarter of my confinement I surpassed even my teachers.

"From this time I thirsted after freedom, after revenge, with a burning thirst. All men had injured me, for all were better and happier than I. I gnashed my fettters with my teeth, when the glorious sun rose up above the battlements of my prison, for a wide prospect doubles the bell of durance. The free wind that whistled through the loop-holes of my turret, and the swallow that poised itself upon the grating of my window, seemed to be mocking me with the view of their liberty; and that rendered my misery more bitter. It was then that I vowed eternal glowing hatred to every thing that bears the image of man—and I have kept my vow.

"My first thought, after I was set at liberty, was once more my native town. I had no hope of happiness there, but I had the dear hope of revenge. My heart beat quick and high against my bosom, when I beheld, afar off, the spire arising from out of the trees. It was no longer that innocent hearty expectation which preceded my first return. The recollection of all the misery, of all the persecution I had experienced there, aroused my faculties from a terrible dead slumber of sullenness, set all my wounds a-bleeding, every nerve a-jarring within me. I redoubled my peace—I longed to stand by my enemies by the horror of my aspect—I thirsted after new contempts as much as I had ever shuddered at the old.

"The clocks were striking the hour of vespers as I reached the market-place. The crowd was rushing to the church-door. I was immediately recognised; every man that knew me shrank from meeting me. Of old I had loved the little children, and even now, seeking in their innocence a refuge from the scorn of others, I threw a small piece of money to the first I saw. The boy stared at me for a moment, and then dashed the coin at my face. Had my blood boiled less furiously, I might have recollected that I still wore my prison beard, and that that was enough to account for the terror of the infant. But my bad heart had blinded my reason, and tears, tears such as I had never wept, leaped down my cheeks.

"The child," said I to myself, half aloud, "knows not who I am, nor whence I came, and yet he avoids me like a beast of prey. Am I then marked on the forehead like Cain, or have I ceased to be like man, since all men spurn me?" The aversion of the child tortured me more than all my three years slavery, for I had done him good, and I could not accuse him of hating me.

"I sat down in a wood-yard over against the church; what my wishes were I know not; but I remember it was wormwood to my spirit, that none of my old acquaintances should have vouchsafed me a greeting—no, not one. When the yard was locked up, I unwillingly departed to seek a lodging: in turning the corner of a street, I ran against my Hannah;—'Mine host of the Sun,' cried she, and opened her arms as if to embrace me.—'You here again, my dear Wolf, God be thanked for your return!' Hunger and wretchedness were expressed in her scanty raiment; a shameful disease had marred her counte-

nance; her whole appearance told me what a wretched creature she had become. I saw two or three dragoons laughing at her from a window, and turned my back, with a laugh louder than theirs, upon the soldiers' trull. It did me good to find that there was something yet lower in the scale of life than myself. I had never loved her.

"My mother was dead. My small house had been sold to pay my creditors. I asked nothing more. I drew near to no man. All the world fled from me like a pestilence, but I had at last forgotten shame. Formerly I hated the sight of men, because their contempt was insufferable to me. Now I threw myself in the way, and found a savage delight in scattering horror around me. I had nothing more to lose, why then should I conceal myself? Men expected no good from me, why should they have any? I was made to bear the punishment of sins I had never committed. My infamy was a capital, the interest of which was not easy to be exhausted.

"The whole earth was before me; in some remote province I might perhaps have sustained the character of an honest man, but I had lost the desire of being so, nay, even of seeming such. Contempt and shame had taken from me even this last relic of myself,—my resource, now that I had no honour, was to learn to do without it. Had my vanity and pride survived my infamy, I must have died by my own hand.

"What I was to do, I myself knew not. I was determined, however, to do evil; of so much I have some dark recollection. I was resolved to see the worst of my destiny. The laws, said I to myself, are benefits to the world, it is fit that I should offend them; formerly I had sinned from levity and necessity, but I now sinned from free choice, and for my pleasure.

"My first step was to the woods. The chase had by degrees become to me as a passion; I thirsted, like a lover, after thick brakes and headlong leaps, and the mad delight of rushing along the bare earth beneath the pines. Besides, I must live. But these were not all. I hated the prince who had published the forest edict, and I believed, that in injuring him, I should only exercise my natural right of retaliation. The chance of being taken no longer troubled me, for now I had a bullet for my discoverer, and I well knew the certainty of my aim. I slew every animal that came near me: the greater part of them rotted where they died; for I neither had the power, nor the wish, to sell more than a few of them beyond the barriers. Myself lived wretchedly; except on powder and shot, I expended nothing. My devastations were dreadful, but no suspicions pursued me. My appearance was too poor to excite any, and my name had long since been forgotten.

"This life continued for several months. One morning, according to my custom, I had pursued a stag for many miles through the wood. For two hours I had in vain exerted every nerve, and at last I had begun to despair of my booty, when, all at once, I perceived the stately animal exactly at the proper distance for my gun—my finger was already on the trigger, when, of a sudden, my eye was caught with the appearance of a hat, lying a few paces before me on the ground. I looked more closely, and perceived the huntsman, Ro-

bert Horn, lurking behind a massy oak, and taking deliberate aim at the very sting I had been pursuing: at the sight a deadly coldness crept through my limbs. Here was the man I hated above all living things; here he was, and within reach of my bullet. At this moment, it seemed to me as if the whole world were at the muzzle of my piece; as if the wrath and hatred of a thousand lives were all quivering in the finger that should give the murderous pressure. A dark, fearful, unseen hand was upon me; the finger of my destiny pointed irrevocably to the black moment. My arm shook as if with an ague, while I lifted my gun—my teeth chattered—my breath stood motionless in my lungs. For a minute the barrel hung uncertain between the man and the stag—a minute—and another—and yet one more. Conscience and revenge struggled fiercely within me; but the demon triumphed, and the huntsman fell dead upon the ground.

"My courage fell with him.—*Murderer!*—I stammered the word slowly. The wood was silent as a church-yard; distinctly did I hear it—*Murderer!*—As I drew near, the man yielded up his spirit. Long stood I speechless by the corpse: at last I forced a wild laugh, and cried, 'no more tales from the wood now, my friend!' I drew him into the thicket with his face upwards! The eyes stood stiff, and staring upon me. I was serious enough, and silent too. The feeling of solitude began to press grievously upon my soul.

"Till this time I had been accustomed to rail at the over severity of my destiny; now I had done something which was not yet punished. An hour before, no man could have persuaded me that there existed a being more wretched than myself. Now I began to envy myself for what even then I had been.

"The idea of God's justice never came into my mind; but I remember a bewildered vision of ropes, and swords, and the dying agonies of a child murderer, which I had witnessed when a boy. A certain dim and fearful idea lay upon my thoughts that my life was forfeited. I cannot recollect every thing. I wished that Horn were yet alive. I forced myself to call up all the evil the dead man had done when in life; but my memory was sadly gone. Scarcely could I recollect one of all those thousand circumstances, which a quarter of an hour before, had been suffered to blow my wrath into phrenzy. I could not conceive how or why I had become a murderer.

"I was still standing beside the corpse,—I might have stood there for ever,—when I heard the crack of a whip, and the creaking of a fruit waggon passing through the wood. The spot where I had done the deed was scarcely a hundred yards from the great path. I must look to my safety.

"I bounded like a wild deer into the depths of the wood; but while I was in my race, it struck me that the deceased used to have a watch. In order to pass the barriers, I had need of money, and yet scarcely could I muster up courage to approach the place of blood. Then I thought for a moment of the devil, and, I believe confusedly, of the omnipresence of God. I called up all my boldness, and strode towards the spot, resolved to dare earth and hell to the combat. I found what I had expected, and a dollar or two besides, in a green silk purse. At first I took all, but a sudden thought seized me. It was neither that I feared, nor that I was ashamed to add another crime to murder. Nevertheless, so it was, I threw back the watch and half the silver. I wished to consider myself as the personal enemy, not as the robber of the slain.

"Again I rushed towards the depths of the forest. I knew that the wood extended for four German miles * northwards, and there bordered upon the frontier.

* Nearly twenty, English measure.

Till the sun was high in heaven, I ran on breathless. The swiftness of my flight had weakened the force of my conscience, but the moment I laid myself down upon the grass, it awoke in all vigour. A thousand dismal forms floated before my eyes; a thousand knives of despair and agony were in my breast. Between a life of restless fear, and a violent death, the alternative was fearful, but choose I must. I had not the heart to leave the world by self-murder, yet scarcely could I bear the idea of remaining in it. Hesitating between the certain miseries of life, and the untried terrors of eternity, alike unwilling to live and to die, the sixth hour of my flight passed over my head—an hour full of wretchedness, such as no man can utter, such as God himself in mercy will spare to me—even to me, upon the scaffold.

"Again I started on my feet. I drew my hat over my eyes, as if not being able to look lifeless nature in the face, and was rushing instinctively along the line of a small footpath, which drew me into the very heart of the wilderness, when a rough, stern voice immediately in front of me cried, 'Halt!' The voice was close to me, for I had forgotten myself, and had never looked a yard before me during the whole race. I lifted my eyes, and saw a tall savage-looking man advancing towards me, with a ponderous club in his hand. His figure was of gigantic size, so at least I thought on my first alarm: his skin was of a dark mulatto yellow, in which the white of his fierce eyes stood fearfully prominent. Instead of a girdle, he had a piece of sailcloth twisted over his green woollen coat, and in it I saw a broad bare butcher's knife, and a pistol. The summons was repeated, and a strong arm held me fast. The sound of a human voice had terrified me,—but the sight of an evil-doer gave me heart again. In my condition, I had reason to fear a good man, but none at all to tremble before a ruffian.

"Whom have we here?" said the apparition.

"Such another as yourself," was my answer—"that is, if your looks don't belie you."

"There is no passage this way. Whom seek ye here?"

"By what right do you ask?" returned I, boldly. The man considered me leisurely twice, from the feet up to the head. It seemed as if he were comparing my figure with his own, and my answer with my figure—

"You speak as stoutly as a beggar," said he at last.

"That may be—I was one yesterday."

"The man smiled—"One would swear," cried he, "you were not much better than one to-day."

"Something worse, friend—I must on?"

"Softly, friend. What hurries you? Is your time so very precious?"

"I considered with myself for a moment. I know not how the words came to the tip of my tongue. 'Life is short,' said I at last, 'and hell is eternal.'

"He looked steadily upon me. 'May I be d—d,' said he, 'if you have not rubbed shoulders with the gallows ere now.'

"It may be so. Farewell, till we meet again comrade."

"Stop, comrade," shouted the man. He pulled a tin flask from his pouch, took a hearty pull of it, and handed it to me. My flight and my anguish had exhausted my strength, and all this day nothing had passed my lips. Already I was afraid I might faint in the wilderness, for there was no place of refreshment within many miles of me. Judge how gladly I accepted his offer. New strength rushed with the liquor into my limbs—with that, fresh courage into my heart, and hope and love of life. I began to believe that I might not be for ever wretched, such power was in the welcome draught. There was

something pleasant in finding myself with a creature of my own stamp. In the state in which I was, I would have pledged a devil, that I might once more have a companion.

"The man stretched himself on the grass. I did the like. 'Your drink has done me good,' said I, 'we must get better acquainted.'

"He struck his flint, and lighted his pipe. 'Are you old in the trade?' said I. 'He looked sternly at me—"What would you say, friend?" "Has that often been bloody?" said I, pointing to the knife in his girdle.

"'Who art thou?' cried he fiercely, and threw down his pipe. 'A murderer, friend, like yourself—but only a beginner.' He took up his pipe again.

"'Your home is not hereabouts?' said he, after a pause.

"'Some three miles off,' said I; 'did you ever hear of the landlord of the Sun at Bielsdorf?'

"The man sprung up like one possessed—"What! the poacher Wolf?" cried he hastily.

"The same."

"Welcome! comrade, welcome!" and give me a shake of thy hand; this is good, mine host of the Sun. Year and day have I sought for thee. I know thee well. I know all. I have long reckoned upon thee, Wolf."

"Reckoned on me?—and wherefore?"

"The whole country is full of you, man; you have had enemies, Wolf; you have been hardly dealt with. You have been made a sacrifice. Your treatment has been shameful."

"The man waxed warm—"What! because you shot a pair of boars or stags it may be, that the prince feeds here on our acorns; was that a reason for chasing you from house and hold, confining you three years in the castle, and making a beggar of you. Is it come to this, that a man is of less worth than a hare? Are we nothing better than the beasts of the field, brother, and can Wolf endure it? I can't."

"Who can alter these things?"

"Ha! that we shall presently see—but tell me, whence come you, and what are you about?"

"I told him my whole story. He would not hear me to an end, but leaped up, and dragged me along with him.—'Come, mine host of the Sun,' said he, 'now you are ripe, now I have you. I shall look for honour from you, Wolf!—follow me!'

"Whither will you lead me?"

"Ask no questions. Follow." And he pulled me like a giant.

"We had advanced some quarter of a mile. The road was becoming every step more thick, wild, and impassable. Neither of us spake a word. I was roused from my reverie by the whistle of my guide. I looked up, and perceived that we were standing on the edge of a rock, which hung over a deep, dark ravine. A second whistle answered from the root of the precipice, and a ladder rose, as if of its own motion, from below. My guide stepped upon it, and desired me to await his return. 'I must first tie up the hounds,' said he; 'you are a stranger here, and the beasts would tear you in pieces.'

"Then I was alone upon the rock, and I well knew that I was alone. The carelessness of my guide did not escape my attention. With a single touch of my hand I could pull up the ladder, and my flight was secure. I confess that I saw this—I began to shudder at the precipice below me, and to think of that depth from which there is no redemption. I resolved upon flight—I put my hand to the ladder, but then came there to my ear, as if with the laughter of devils, 'What can a murderer do?' and my arm dropped powerless by my side. My reckoning was complete. Murder lay like a rock behind me, and barred all retreat for ever. At this moment my guide re-appeared, and bade me come

down. I had no longer any choice—I obeyed him.

"A few yards from the foot of the precipice the ground widened a little, and some huts became visible. In the midst of these, there was a little piece of smooth turf, and there about eighteen or twenty figures lay scattered around a coal-fire. 'Here, comrades,' cried my guide, leading me into the centre of the group; 'here, get up and bid the landlord welcome.'

"Welcome, good landlord," cried all at once, and crowded around me, men and women. Shall I confess it? Their joy appeared hearty and honest: confidence and respect was in every countenance; one took me by the hand, another by the cloak. My reception was such as might have been expected by some old and valued friend. Our arrival had interrupted their repast—we joined it, and I was compelled to pledge my new friends in a bumper. The meal consisted of game of all kinds; and the bottle, filled with good Rhenish, was not allowed to rest for an instant. The company seemed to be full of affection towards each other, and of good-will towards me.

"They had made me sit down between two women, and this seemed to be considered as a place of honour. I expected to find these refuse of their sex, but how great was my astonishment, when I perceived, under their coarse garments, two of the most beautiful females I had ever seen. Margaret, the elder and handsomer of the two, was addressed by the name of Miss, and might be five-and-twenty. Her language was free, and her looks were still more eloquent. Mary, the younger, was married, but her husband had treated her cruelly, and deserted her. Her features were, perhaps, prettier, but she was pale and thin, and less striking, on the whole, than her fiery neighbour. They both endeavoured to please me. Margaret was the beauty, but my heart was more taken with the womanly, gentle Mary.

"Brother Wolf," cried my guide, "you see now we live here—with us every day is alike: is it not so, comrades?"

"Every day like the present," cried they all.

"If you like our way of life," continued the man, "strike in, be one of us—our captain. I bear the dignity for the present, but I will yield it to Wolf. Say I right, comrades?" A hearty 'Yes, yes,' was the answer.

"My brain was on fire, wine and passion had inflamed my blood. The world had thrown me out like a leper—here were brotherly welcome, good cheer, and honour! Whatever choice I might make, I knew death was before me; but here at least I might sell my life dearly. Women had till now spurned me; the smiles of Mary were nectar to my soul. 'I remain with you, comrades,' cried I, loudly and firmly, stepping into the midst of the band—"I remain with you, my good friends, provided you give me my pretty neighbour." They all consented to gratify my wish, and I sat down contented, lord of a strumpet, and captain of a banditti."

The following part of the history we shall entirely omit, for there is no instruction in that which is purely disgusting. The unhappy Wolf, sunk to this hopeless depth, was obliged to partake in all the routine of wickedness; but he was never guilty of a second murder; so at least he swore solemnly upon the scaffold.

The fame of this man spread, in a short time, through the whole province. The highways were unsafe; nocturnal robbers alarmed the citizens; the name of Christian Wolf became the terror of old and young; justice set every device at work to ensnare him; and a premium was set upon his head. Yet he was fortunate enough to escape every attempt against his person, and crafty enough to convert the superstition of the peasantry into an

engine of defence. It was universally given out that Wolf was in league with the devil; that his whole band were wizards. The province is a remote and ignorant one, and no man was very willing to come to close quarters with the ally of the apostate.

For a full year did Wolf persist in this terrible trade, but at last it began to be intolerable to him. The men at whose head he had placed himself, were not what he had supposed. They had received him at first with an exterior of profusion, but he soon discovered that they had deceived him. Hunger and want appeared in the room of abundance: he was often obliged to venture his life for a booty, which, when won, was scarcely sufficient to support his existence for a single day.

The veil of brotherly affection soon passed away, and beneath it he found the lurking paltrinesses of thieves and harpies. A large reward had been proclaimed for him that should deliver Wolf alive into the hands of justice; if the discover should be one of his own gang, a free pardon was promised in addition; a mighty search for the outcast of the earth! Wolf was sensible of his danger. The honour of those who were at war with God and man, seemed but an insufficient security for his life. From this time his sleep was agony; wherever he was, the ghost of suspicion haunted him—pursued his steps—watched his pillow—disturbed his dreams. Long silenced conscience again raised her voice, and slumbering remorse began to awake and mingle her terrors in the universal storm of his bosom. His whole hatred was turned from mankind, and concentrated upon his own head. He forgave all nature, and was inexorable only to himself.

This misery of guilt completed his education, and delivered at last his naturally excellent understanding from its shackles. He now felt how low he had fallen; sadness took the place of phrenzy in his bosom. Cold tears and solitary sighs obliterated the past; for him it no more existed. He began to hope that he might yet dare to be a good man, for he felt within himself the awakening power of being such. It may be that Wolf, at this the moment of his greatest degradation, was nearer the right path than he had ever been since he first quitted it.

About this time the seven years' war broke out, and the German Princes were everywhere making great levies of troops. The unhappy Wolf shaped some slight hope to himself from these circumstances, and at last took courage to pen the following letter to his sovereign:

“ If it be not too much for princely compassion to descend to such as Christian Wolf, give him a hearing. I am a thief and a murderer—the laws condemn me to death—justice has set all her myrmidons in search of me—I beg that I may be permitted to deliver up myself. But I bring, at the same time, a strange petition to the throne. I hate my life—I fear not death—but I cannot bear to die without having lived. I would live, my prince, in order to atone, by my services, for my offences. My execution might be an example to the world, not an equivalent for my deeds. I hate the wretchedness of guilt; I thirst after virtue. I have shown my power to do evil; permit me to show my power to do good. I know that I make an unheard-of request. My life is forfeit. It may seem absurd for me to state any pretensions to favour. But I appear not in chains and bonds before you—I am still free—and fear is the least among all the motives of my petition. It is to mercy that I have fled. I have no claim upon justice; if I had, I should disdain to bring it forward. Yet of one circumstance I might remind my judges:—the period of my outrages commenced with that of my degradation. Had their sentence been less severe, perhaps I

should have no occasion to be a suppliant to-day.

“ If you give me my life, it shall be dedicated to your service. A single word in the gazette shall bring me immediately to your feet. If otherwise you have determined, let justice do her part—I must do mine.”

CHRISTIAN WOLF.”

This petition remained without an answer; so did a second, and a third, in which Wolf begged to be permitted to serve as a hussar in the army of the prince. At last, losing all hope of a pardon, he resolved to fly from the country, and die a brave soldier in the service of King Frederick.

He gave his companions the slip, and took to his journey. The first day brought him to a small country town, where he resolved to spend the night.

The circumstances of the times, the commencing war, the recruiting, made the officers at every post doubly vigilant in observing travellers. The gate-keeper of the town had received a particular command to be attentive. The appearance of Wolf had something imposing about it, but, at the same time, swarthy, terrible, and savage. The meagre bony horse he rode, and the grotesque and scanty arrangement of his apparel, formed a strange contrast with a countenance whereon a thousand fierce passions seemed to lie exhausted and congealed, like the dying and dead upon a field of battle. The gate keeper started at the strange apparition. Forty years of experience had made the man, grown grey in his office, as sharp-sighted as an eagle in detecting offenders. He immediately bolted his gate, and demanded the passport of Wolf. The fugitive was, however, prepared for this accident; and he drew out, without hesitation, a pass which he had taken a few days before from a plundered merchant. Still this solitary evidence was not able entirely to satisfy the scruples of the practised officer. The gate-keeper trusted his own eyes rather than the paper, and Wolf was compelled to follow him to the town-house.

The chief magistrates of the place examined the pass, and declared it to be in every respect what it should be. It happened that this man was a great politician; his chief pleasure in life consisted in conning over a newspaper, with a bottle of wine before him. The passport showed forth that its bearer had come from the very centre of the seat of war. He hoped to draw some private intelligence from the stranger; and the clerk, who brought back the pass, requested Wolf to step in, and take a bottle of Mark-brunner with his master.

Meantime the traveller had remained on horseback at the door of the town-house, and his singular appearance had collected about him half the rabble of the place. They looked at the horse and his rider by turns—they laughed—they whispered—at last it had become a perfect tumult. Unfortunately the animal Wolf rode on was a stolen one, and he immediately began to fancy that it had been described in some of the prints. The unexpected invitation of the magistrate completed his confusion. He took it for granted that the falsity of his pass had been detected, and that the invitation was only a trick for getting hold of him alive. A bad conscience stupefied his faculties—he clapped spurs to his horse, and galloped off without making any answer to the clerk.

The sudden flight convinced all that had before suspected him. “ A thief, a robber,” was the cry, and the whole mob were at his heels. Wolf rode for life and death, and he soon left his pursuers breathless behind. His deliverance is near; but a heavy hand was upon him—the hour was come; unrelenting destiny was there.

The road he had taken led to no outlet, and Wolf was obliged to turn round upon his pursuers.

The alarm of this incident had, in the meantime, set the whole town into an uproar; every road was blockaded, and a whole host of enemies came forth to receive him. He draws out a pistol; the crowd yields; he begins to make a way for himself through their ranks.

“ The first that lays a finger on me—will soon have need of compassion from God. You will not deny it to me. Am I not right? To whom do you suppose yourself to be speaking?”

“ What is this?—you alarm me.”

“ Do you not guess the truth?—Write to your prince how you found me, and that I have been my own betrayer. May God's mercy to him be such as his shall be to me. Entreat for me, old man—weep for me—my name is *Wolf*.”

THE GLEANER.

So we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
Talk of Court News; and we'll talk with them too,
Who loses not who wins; who's in, and who's out;
Who's like us, and who's not; who's the mystery of things,
And who's not.

SHAKESPEARE.

“ William Evelyn, says Evelyn, was the son of a mean man, somewhere in Sussex, and sent from school to Oxon, where he studied philosophy, and became famous by recovering a poor wretch that had been hanged for felony; and her body had been begged (as the custom is) for the anatomic lecture, he bled her, put her to bed to a warm woman, and with spirits and other means restored her to life. The young scholars joined, and gave her a little portion, and married her to a man who had several children by her.

The Romantic Harness-Maker.—A young man named Morin, who exercised the calling of a harness-maker at Sainte-Menehould, was seized with an irresistible passion for perusing romances. He employed not only his leisure hours, but even a part of the time which he ought to have devoted to labour, in the reading of these books. His imagination was heated by the passionate pages of Rousseau's romance, and he searched every where for a *Heloise*. He found one in the person of a young and pretty woman, who, by a singular chance, had been christened by that highly-prized name. An intimacy commenced between them, and *Heloise* was weak enough to consent to a rendezvous with her admirer. They met on the 28th of last July at the place agreed upon, and walked together until they found themselves in a retired spot. Morin suddenly stopped here, and drawing from his pocket a narrow awl, which harness-makers use for the purpose of boring holes in leather, he cordially embraced his sweetheart, saying, “ Here, dear *Heloise*, we must die.” At the same moment he struck her a violent blow on the breast with the awl, which doubtless would have proved mortal had not the point of the instrument come in contact with the whalebone of her stays, in which it broke and remained fixed. He followed up this blow by eight more, which made so many wounds more or less profound. He afterwards endeavoured to sacrifice himself, and after inflicting many wounds upon himself, he fell, bathed in his blood. None of the wounds of either party were fatal, although many penetrated the thorax; and they were both perfectly cured. Morin was tried for the crime at the court of assizes at Marne, on the 19th of this month. The king's attorney-general, who supported the accusation, said the cause of the prisoner's act was to be found in habits of reading, and he reproached the perusal of improper works, which often betrayed weak minds into the commission of deplorable extravagances. He, however, abandoned the charge of premeditation. The jury found that the prisoner was not guilty of wilfully attempting to murder *Heloise* F—, but declared that an attempt to murder, which was only prevented from being carried into execution by the fortuitous circumstances, independent of the will of the actor, was proved against the prisoner. Notwithstanding this verdict, which appears somewhat anomalous, the paper from which this account is taken states that Morin was immediately set at liberty.

“ I hope you will forgive us, if we dealt somewhat hardly with you yesterday evening.”

“ Most willingly, since you ask me to do so.”

“ Our rules are strict, and your conduct gave rise to suspicion. I cannot set you free without departing from my duty.—Appearances are against you. I wish you would say something, which might satisfy us of your good character.”

“ And if I should say nothing?”

“ Then I must send your passport to Munich, and you must remain here till it returns.”

Wolf was silent for a few minutes, appeared to be much agitated; he then stepped close up to the magistrate.

“ Can I be a quarter of an hour alone with you?”

The counsellors looked doubtfully at each other; but the magistrate motioned to them, and they withdrew.”

“ Now, what will you?”

“ Your conduct yesterday evening, Sir, could never have brought me to your terms, for I despise violence. The manner in which you treat me to-day has filled me with respect for your character.—I believe you to be an honourable man.”

“ What have you to say to me?”

“ I see you are an honourable man. I have long wished to meet with such a man. Will you give me your right hand?”

“ What will you, stranger?”

“ Your head is grey and venerable. You have been long in the world—you have had sorrows too—is it not so?—and they have made you more merciful?”

“ Sir, what mean you?”

“ You are near to eternity—yourself

THE TRAVELLER.

"Tis pleasant, through the loop-holes of retreat,
To peep at such a world; to see the stir
Of the great Babel, and not feel the crowd
COWPER.

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE CRIM TARTARS. No. I.

A very amusing work has lately appeared in London, from the pen of Mary Holderness, who resided from the year 1816 to 1820, at the village of Karagoss, in the Crimea, where she had constant opportunities of becoming acquainted with the Tartar inhabitants of the neighbourhood. This volume contains much interesting information, and as it respects a people of whom we have hitherto had little knowledge, we are persuaded the extracts we intend giving, and which have afforded us considerable entertainment, will be acceptable to the readers of the MINERVA.

Simplicity of Manners.—In the simple life of the Tartars much may be traced of similarity with those recorded in the earliest ages of scripture history. Their riches consist now, as was usual then, in flocks and herds, and in the number of their families. Many also of their domestic habits are the same; nor is it so much a matter of wonder, that, in lives so simple, so much accordance should be found, as that any people, having had for some centuries past an intercourse with more civilized nations, should still retain those manners which characterized mankind before learning had enlightened, and commerce enriched the world. Here, the former is still unknown, and the latter scarcely ventures a step beyond the neighbourhood of the seaport whither navigation tempts her. Exchange is still the medium of purchase, and money is but seldom required or produced in bargains made between one Tartar and another, since they look with far more anxious eyes at the expenditure of a single *petack**, than at the cost of ten or twenty roubles, if negotiated by the way of exchange. Poor Tartars, like Jacob, serve an apprenticeship for their wives, and are then admitted as part of the family.

Costume.—The dress of a Tartar gentleman is of cloth, trimmed with gold or silver lace, or, in the heat of summer, of Turkish silk, or, of silk mixed with stuff. In winter, his coat is lined with fur; his trousers are worn tight and low at the ankles, and are made of some bright coloured linen, frequently blue. He wears upper and under slippers, and no stockings. He has generally a large high cap of broad cloth, (which distinguishes him from the peasantry,) and a coloured linen shirt. The priests and old men wear their beards, but the young shave them. All shave the head; and the Mallas are known by a white linen cloth which they bind round the outside of their caps.

The dress of the women consists of a pair of trousers, tied at the ankle and falling loose to the heel; a shift, and a quilted robe, made either of Turkish silk or cotton, or of gold or silver brocade, according to the rank and condition of the wearer. The cap worn by the girls is of red cloth, trimmed round with gold fringe, or (amongst the peasantry) with their small gold money, of which they also make necklaces; these latter are likewise sometimes of silver, in form somewhat resembling a collar, being tight round the neck, with silver pendants hung close around it. Their bracelets occasionally consist of three or four silver chains affixed to a broad clasp, but are most commonly rings of coloured glass, of which they often wear two or three on each arm. Every finger is loaded with a multitude of rings of brass, lead, silver, and some few of gold, generally with coloured stones in them. A broad belt is

worn around the waist, hanging very loose and as low as the hips: its materials vary according to the taste of the owner, but it is generally worked with gold or silver thread on black velvet, and fastened with a clasp as big as the palms of both hands; these are sometimes of gold or silver, richly embossed, and occasionally of brass or lead. A pair of silver tongs costs from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and seventy roubles.

Tartar women.—The Tartar women suckle their children from two or three years, and think us barbarous for weaning ours so early. For the first half year they are seldom carried in the arms, but are commonly laid on their backs in a kind of cradle, in which they are bound so as not to roll out. To the top of this, immediately over their heads, are attached coloured beads, bits of glass, or money, in order to attract their notice. This, to an English mother, appears a most promising plan for making the infants cross-eyed, but it rarely happens that they are so. A Tartar child is swathed from head to foot with no other clothes than a few rags, for the first two or three months, but, after that, it is habited in the same stiff and formal manner as the mother; and its dress, the ugliness of its features, and, more than all, the scorbutic humours which almost invariably cover it from a very short time after its birth, make it, of all the infants I ever saw, the most disgusting and uninteresting. Rarely, indeed, is one seen which we may venture to take in our arms.

A Tartar wife is most completely the slave of her husband, and that the men consider her such I had from the mouth of one of the most respectable of them. Thus she is only desirable as she serves to gratify his passions, or to connect him with some Tartar of better family or greater riches than himself. Among the peasantry, however, who are less bound by rigid forms, or less observant of them than their superiors, I have often seen sincere affection displayed, ~~but~~ religious tenets, as well as long established customs, teach them to suppress and subdue feeling rather than to indulge it. When a Murza visits the apartments of his women, they all rise on his entrance, and again when he leaves it, although he comes and goes very frequently. This ceremonious mark of respect is never omitted, even by the wife or by any other of the females, except they be very old women, who, on account of their age, are excused from this form.

Marriages.—December 21st, O. S. 1819. The wedding of one of the sons of Atti Bey Murza is now going on in this neighbourhood, where it is supposed that the persons who will assemble on the last day of the ceremony, will not be fewer than a thousand, and that the money expended will not be less than seven or eight thousand roubles. The receiving of guests will have lasted eight days, and on each day from four or five hundred persons have attended.

It is by no means rare for a Tartar peasant to expend from one thousand to two thousand roubles at his wedding, though there are many who are compelled by poverty to more frugality.

It is well known that the Mahometan law admits of a plurality of wives. Four are allowed, but few Tartars are found to have more than one. As long as they continue to live in unity with the first, it very seldom happens that they take a second; for the women, though brought up in such perfect subservience and submission, have still the same passions and feelings as ourselves, and can as ill brook to share with another the affections of their husbands. Whether or no, the existence of the law, and the knowledge of the right which it confers, may stimulate them to a more attentive observance of their duties, and more constant endeavours to maintain undivided the regard of their lords, I

will not venture to say, but I think it by no means an improbable effect; certain it is, that though a Tartar husband is supreme and absolute, and though he considers his wife most perfectly his slave, still is he affectionate and kind to her, and instances of unhappy marriages are rare. In cases where husbands have two or more wives, separate apartments and separate establishments must be given them; they will never consent to live together, and always regard each other with feelings of hatred, jealousy, and pride.

The priest possesses the power of giving a divorce under particular circumstances. If the husband beat or ill use his wife, she may complain to the Mulla, who, attended by the community of the village, comes to the house, and pronounces a formal separation between the parties. The woman goes back to her own relations.

Runaway matches, though not common, sometimes happen, and appear to be as valid as those which are sanctioned by the priest. No other shame attaches to them than that which results from the omission of their proud ceremonials and festivities. The woman considers herself as effectually bound to the man, and he as faithfully attaches himself to her, as if they had passed through the long ordeal of a Tartar marriage. An instance of this happened in the village of Karagoss, amongst our own labourers.

A Tartar having more than one daughter, will not give the younger in marriage before the elder, even though a higher price be offered for her: therefore, be her beauty or disposition ever so much commended and extolled by her attendants, the girl has no chance of being married sooner than her sisters, or, perhaps, if there be many of them, of getting a husband at all. Among the peasantry, however, this rule is possibly dispensed with. The daughter of a Murza may not marry a peasant, and the number of her own rank is now diminished to a small sum.

LITERATURE.

Anticipations of public opinion in the year 2300, on the English Poets of the present day.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.—An eminent poet and would-be novelist of the 19th century. He published 2000 volumes in prose, and died at length of a broken heart, from the circumstance of having been outbid at a sale in the purchase of a black-letter piece of antiquity, afterwards proved to be spurious. His avowed aim was to rival Lopez de Vega, and treble the tax on paper, in which he ultimately succeeded, and was rewarded by a liberal government with a baronetcy. It was his usual boast, that he had written more in a few years than the world would be able to read in as many centuries. In his last moments, he raved about Ballantyne and Winkin de Worde; declared that publication was his deity; that he thought of no devil but the printer's devil, and regretted no errors but those of the press. His remains were shrouded in sheets of the "Battle of Waterloo," and "Hallidon Hill," and followed to the grave by Constable and Company, then celebrated book-sellers, and by all the printers in England and Holland. The superstitions of that dark and barbarous age have not failed to inform us, that even after his death his spirit paid nocturnal visits to the press, and delighted to disarrange, with its un-substantial fingers, the types it could no longer employ.

ROBERT SOUTHEY. poet, biographer, and historian. This author produced an infinite number of stupendous poems, some of which, it is said, were to be seen in the libraries of the curious about a century ago, but are now totally obsolete and forgotten. He published proposals for

nine hundred epic poems, to be produced in as many successive weeks; but, after writing six months without sleep, he was seized with an unaccountable drowsiness, from which he never recovered; and it was ever afterwards remarked, that his works had sympathetically imbibed the power of producing similar torpid sensations on others. He died in a fit of blank verse, having accomplished little more than half his proposed task. A malicious story is told of this writer being, at one time, the King's Jester, or *Court Buffoon*, with the singular title of *Poet Laureat*—a name, as is now generally supposed, given in derision to those contemptible creatures who wrote bombastic verses in praise of the king and court. But this is a mere traditional rumour, and, in all probability, far from being founded on truth.

WORDSWORTH. A poet; none of whose multifarious productions have reached our age, with the exception of a few passages, which, for their prettiness and extreme simplicity, have for many years found a place in the London Primer, and modern Reading made Easy. He formed his style when a child, and never departed from it, the simplicity of the nursery being obvious and apparent through the whole range of his more mature efforts. The uniform tendency of his writings was to throw down (at least in the poetical world) all distinctions of men and things; to render the mishaps of a Plough-boy of equal importance with the calamities of a Monarch, and lamb bleating on the mountains an object as spirit-stirring as a victorious army. From contemporary writings, preserved by the lovers of ancient trash, we learn that Wordsworth either wrote or planned a poem of some magnitude, named "The Excursion," consisting of one hundred cantos, and an introduction in fifty parts. This work, if accomplished, has long been forgotten. He was the inventor of rebus- and conundrums; and in his extreme old age, is said, (we know not how truly) to have thrown the adventure of "Jack the Giant Killer," into blank verse, with a prefatory essay on true simplicity of style. We have likewise met with the titles of various other works attributed to this now forgotten bard; such as "Tommy Hickathrift," "The Bloody Gardner," "The White Doe," &c. &c. But how far tradition may speak correctly on these points, it would, at this distance of time, be useless to inquire.

Analytical Spelling-Book; by John Franklin Jones. E. Bliss & E. White. 1823.

Who would think of reviewing a spelling-book, as long as there are hundreds of mightier matters requiring his attention? No one, we think, who had not been a schoolmaster; or, at least, who had been severely flogged by one for bad spelling and worse pronunciation. Neither the one nor the other has fallen to our lot; so we must find some other excuse for occupying our columns with a subject, which legitimately belongs to those who teach the child the first elements of education. But what after all is education? Our opinions have undergone considerable change since we were compelled to construe Greek and Latin, and read of wars which never happened, and to admire heroes who never led on a squadron or broke a lance. We now think that education is the science of facts; and that learning words is only the road to them. We are also something of the opinion of a great dictionary maker, who, when asked what a boy should learn first, replied, that it was of no more consequence than which leg of his pantaloons he put on first, so that he put them on. Were teachers all that they should be, there would be little need of books in schools of any kind; for, after all, the pupil learns more of a subject by hearing his teacher repeat it correctly twice, than by reading it ten times himself.

* About two cents.

Spelling-books are about as much alike as houses; some have more rooms and closets than others. Still they are only houses; and if we can judge of this book of Mr. Jones', it has about as many apartments as are needed for small folks. What the author says about plagiarism, we do not consider of any consequence. He had the English language before him, and he could build of no other materials. Out of these, we think, he has reared a snug little edifice, which, as it has novelty to recommend it, is of no small importance to the pupil. We really wish that we could have as many new spelling-books as we have novels, or, at least, one every year. There is a great loss of time in repeating well known lessons; pupils get tired of them, and thus become disgusted with education. We fully concur in the opinion of our correspondent T. D., that works containing the definitions of words, should be more generally used, and that newspapers should be substituted for most of the books of essays read in our schools. Novelty keeps the youthful mind on the stretch, and scholars do not fall into that state of inanity and negligence, which too often appear in those seminaries where variety is not studied by the teachers.

We consider the book before us as good in its arrangement as any we have seen; it is sufficiently analytical; and the lessons have an agreeable variety, which are calculated to please and instruct. Under this impression, we feel no difficulty in recommending its introduction into our schools.

THE DRAMA.

—Whilst the Drama bows to Virtue's cause,
To aid her precepts and enforce her laws,
So long the just and generous will befriend,
And triumph on her efforts will attend.

BROOK.

FRENCH OPERA.

FIRST REPRESENTATION OF SAPPHO.

Paris, December, 17, 1822.

The story of Sappho is not entirely new to the French stage. Affording few incidents, but these the most striking, and offering a vehicle for music the most passionate, the most tender, and the most romantic that can be conceived; it is only surprising that this beautiful tale has not been more frequently harmonized. Aware of all this, the audience assembled last night at the Academie Royale de Musique, expected to hear sounds the most sublime and touching—how far the poet and the composer succeeded in gratifying this expectation I shall inform you presently: but it may not be amiss to give you, first, a brief sketch of the story, as developed in the course of the performance.

After a very brilliant overture, in the course of which the delightful tones of the lyre were most appropriately and successfully introduced, the curtain rose, and displayed a fine scene representing a picturesque view of the sea coast of the island of Sicily—having on one side a lofty beacon, the light of which is expiring—on the other the ruins of an antique temple, partly overthrown. It is still night, and the sea is agitated by a storm. A gang of pirates enter, who in sweet numbers, informed us, that having described a vessel, tempest tossed, which appeared making for the shore, they had come to the laudable resolution of concealing themselves until the unfortunate men should land, with the intention to surprise and give them a spice of their office. The pirates have scarcely retired, when a numerous body of fishermen and their wives present themselves, who, in loud chorus, address the powerful god of the ocean, beseeching him to allay the storm. A principal fisher, or (as the Poet stiles him) *un Coryphe*, in a fine solo, desires his comrades to rekindle the twinkling beacon, as a direction to the labouring barque, a command, which, in my depraved heart, created the horrible surmise, that these ancient inhabitants of

Sicily's iron-bound coast were no strangers to the humane attentions practised on similar occasions in our own days, by the amiable inhabitants of another sea-coast, which shall be nameless. The fishers then depart. The vessel approaches the shore, and in its prow is seen the harmonious, deserted, and unhappy wanderer Sappho, who has left Lesbos in search of Phaon, her faithless lover. Sappho is distinguished by her lyre from the numerous damsels by whom she is surrounded. Day begins to break, and Phaon enters—bewails his wretched fate, which, however, he has the candour to admit he has richly merited—and all this he does in strains that deserve notice, particularly in this couplet:—

En m'exilant sous un ciel étranger
Vainement de mes maux Je crus me dégager,
Quelle était mon erreur extreme!
En Sicile, comme à Lesbos.
Il ne plus pour moi de repos:
Heus! Peut-on se fuir soi-même?

The warbling deceiver is interrupted in his song by his new flame, Neris, a young Sicilian maiden, to whom he avows that he still loves Sappho; but overcome by the caresses of Neris, and the entreaties of her father Narbas, he consents to render her his spouse; this scene is concluded by a charming trio.

They retire just as the barque of Sappho touches the shore—She lands with her *élèves*—is surrounded by the pirates, who rush from their hiding-place; having previously entreated the aid of all evil spirits; seize the fair crew, and despoil Sappho of her golden lyre—She invokes Venus in words and accents irresistible—The Pirates are suddenly melted—In a grand chorus they thus express themselves—

O!—voix enchantresse!
Où sublimes accents!
Quelle subite ivresse
S'empare de messes!
Ne résiste plus à ces sons ravissants!

They restore her lyre to Sappho, who receives it exclaiming

Lyre fidèle—Oh—mon amie!

The Pirates fall at her feet—In a truly inspired tone she proceeds—Commands them to fly, for that Apollo only suspended the blow with which he was ready to punish their sacrilegious robbery—The Pirates escape in disorder, and the act concludes by a chorus of Sappho and her companions, which, in harmony, has seldom been excelled. Sappho then rushes out in search of Phaon.

The second act commences with a view of a hall in the interior of the temple already mentioned. Sappho enters with her companions overcome by fatigue; she sinks on a bench, and is lulled to sleep by the notes of the lyre struck by her attendants, who afterwards retire. This is the moment chosen for the introduction of the *dance*, which forms always the prominent feature in a French opera. A troop of beautiful girls appear to her as in a dream; they execute some figures; retire, and re-enter with an equal number of young men, each bearing a chaplet or a basket of flowers which they offer to Sappho. These are then joined in succession by Coulon and Madame Noblet, Albert, and Mesdames Fanny (Bias) and Anatole—and Paul, and his sister, Madame Montessu.

Madame Noblet never equalled, even here, her performance of last night—Paul outdid himself. During this dance (by accident, I suppose,) it happened that the female costume on the stage presented the idolized tricolore of France. The women wore regularly chequered red, blue, and white—a circumstance to which my attention was attracted by the exclamations and the plaudits of the decorated portion of the audience.

During the dance, Sappho continues to chant delightfully in a suppressed voice. The dancers disappear—the attendants of Sappho re-enter, with whom, after a beautiful bravura and chorus, she departs once more in search of Phaon. The

next scene presents a view of the temple of Juno. Phaon, Neris, Narbas, and various Sicilians, enter. After some good music, the high priest, attended by a numerous suite, issues from the peristyle of the temple. He is just about to join Phaon and Neris in holy wedlock, when he is interrupted by the entrance of Sappho, who forbids the banns. Horrified at this interruption, the high priest and his assistants command all to retire—

The people fly in disorder—Neris is dragged off by her father—Sappho pursues Phaon. Thus ends the second act.

The third act commences with a view of the sea-coast. At each side are immense rocks; but one, to the left of the spectator, is remarkable for its height—it is the rock of Leucade. Phaon enters, followed by Sappho. An affecting scene ensues, but she fails to make any impression on the faithless Phaon, until she snatches from her maids the lyre, and, touching it, recalls him to a recollection of former scenes of happiness. A duet follows, the music of which is charmingly sweet and pathetic. Phaon, overcome by love, consents to embark with Sappho. She hands her lute to her *élèves*—the sails of her vessel flutter in the wind—Phaon and Sappho approach the ship, are just about to cross the plank, when Neris rushes in, followed by Narbas, and a crowd of Sicilians. Phaon proves again fickle—he takes the hand of Neris. Maddened at this new perfidy, Sappho snatches her lyre once more from her followers, runs up to the summit of the rock, and precipitates herself into the sea. Phaon attempts to follow her example, but is withheld. Phaon entreats the gods to consummate their vengeance. The pontiff and the other Priests of Juno enter, and announce that the gods are about to make known their will and pleasure. Then follows a scene, the triumph of heart, and of the beauty of which scarcely an idea can be created by description.

From that part of the sea into which *Sappho* has plunged, a light vapour almost immediately ascends—it floats around the stage—increases—becomes more dense—volumes of black smoke succeed—the whole surface of the sea is covered, and the sky obscured; a few enchanting notes are heard—the clouds become less dark; the vapour lightens, partially clears away, and displays a view of Mount Parnassus, the most brilliant that can be conceived—heightened as it is by contrast with the preceding scene. Apollo is seen surrounded by the Muses, in front of a superb and radiant temple. To the most magical music Venus rises from the sea, supporting Sappho, borne on a brilliant cloud; they ascend to Parnassus—are received by Apollo, who crowns and creates Sappho a tenth Muse—she is hailed and recognised by the sisters nine, in a delightful chorus. In the centre of the group, and led by Venus and Apollo, Sappho enters the temple of immortality. The Opera concludes by the union of Phaon and Neris.

Having occupied unexpectedly so much space, I shall refrain from further observation at present, and conclude by informing you that the Opera was loudly applauded. The name of the Poet was called for, as is usual on every first representation; but his modesty would not allow him to be made known. The composer of the music is Reicha. The ballets are the productions of Gardel. The decorations are by Ciceri.

BIOGRAPHY.

MEMOIRS OF PIETRO GIANNONE

This celebrated historian was born at Ischitella, a town of Naples, in the year 1676. In his 18th year he repaired to the capital to complete his studies. The progress he made in civil law, and the

great talents he displayed on other subjects, attracted the notice of Sant'Antonio Argenzo, afterwards President of the Royal Council, in whose house the men of the greatest abilities in the country used to assemble. Here Giannone conceived the design of writing a history of the kingdom of Naples, which, after twenty years labour, he published under the title of "Istoria Civile Del Regno Di Napole," in four volumes quarto.

In order to elude the censures of the clergy, which would have crushed the work in its birth, Giannone had it privately printed in the neighbourhood of Naples. This precaution, however, did not secure him from their persecutions. They pretended their rights were attacked; they preached publicly against him; and, by every means they could devise, endeavoured to convince the people, that he was the greatest profligate alive. In vain did the viceroy employ his authority to pacify the monks: in vain did the Council of Naples appoint him Advocate of the city, with a handsome present in testimony of their approbation of his history; the populace, urged on by his persecutors, insulted him in the public streets; the archbishop expelled him from the church, and at Rome his work was solemnly and openly committed to the flames. In the same year in which it appeared, he was forced to leave Naples, and take refuge at Vienna. The Emperor Charles VI. at first viewed him with a sullen aspect; but afterwards, on perusing the history at the recommendation of several persons of distinction, he granted him an annual pension, though he could never be prevailed on to appoint him to any public office.

At Vienna, Giannone wrote two sarcastic pieces on the excommunication of the Archbishop of Naples, though he had been immediately absolved from it by Cardinal Pignatelli, and also against the papal prohibition of his history. By the advice of his friends, therefore, he only circulated the satires in writing. Patronized by the grandees of the court, and in favour with a great number of the learned, Giannone fearlessly published several other works, the principal of which was directed against the papal crown, and abounded with protestant principles.

In the year 1734, when the kingdom of Naples and Sicily fell under the dominion of Don Carlos, Giannone had the misfortune to lose his pension, and with it all hopes of returning to his native country. He left Vienna, and went to seek his fortune at Venice, where he was favourably received by the grandees of the republic, and all who had any pretensions to letters. He also acquired the esteem of the Ambassadors of France and Spain, who used all their interest to promote his wish of returning to Naples; but in this they were defeated through the influence of the monks. The Venetians offered to promote Giannone to the honourable post of *Consulatore Onorario* of the republic, with the assurance that he should be put in possession of the office as soon as it was vacant; in the meantime, he might enjoy the situation of Professor of the Pandects at Padua.—But he frankly acknowledged that he was not capable of expounding the Pandects in Latin, conformably to the usage of that University.

During all this, his enemies were exerting themselves to render him suspected by the government. They brought a charge against him of exciting a plot against the state, in conjunction with the ministers of France and Spain, whom he frequently visited. It was determined to banish him the republic. He was accordingly seized and removed to the borders of Terra. Here, to avoid the papal spies, he assumed the name Antonio Rinaldo, and repaired to Modena, where he recited for some weeks, until his papers were brought him, and then travelled, with great circumspection, through Lombardy, to Milan and Turin. Unable to

procure a livelihood in either of these cities, he steered for Geneva, where he arrived on the 5th of December, 1735. His reputation had already gained him many friends in this place, who were all bountiful towards him, and exerted themselves to the utmost to procure him a permanent subsistence.

While at Geneva, Giannone wrote a supplement to his history, sufficient for a fifth volume; but it was never put to press, owing to the timidity of the bookseller. In the midst of Protestants, our author zealously adhered to the Romish worship. This circumstance was made use of by his adversaries to get possession of his person. A pretended friend enticed him into a catholic village, named Visna, belonging to the king of Sardinia, for the purpose of observing Easter.—Here the king, in order to ingratiate himself with the court of Rome, had him arrested, and confined in the castle of Milan, from which he was removed and lodged in the citadel of Turin, where he was debarred all access to his relations and friends. In the custody and under the entire control of his enemies, Giannone was induced, at the age of 62 years, and on the promise of being set at liberty, to retract all that he had written against the Romish church. But notwithstanding this retraction, he was detained a close prisoner for upwards of ten years more, by which he became so exhausted with grief and sickness, that he fell a victim to the malice of his unrelenting persecutors on the 7th of March, 1748, in the 72d year of his age.

ARTS AND SCIENCES.

Science has sought, on weary shore,
By sea and shore, each mute and living thing.
CAMPBELL.

THE CAA, OR TEA TREE OF PARAGUAY.

Martin Dobrizhoffer, who resided eighteen years among the people of Paraguay, states, that a tree grows in that country called *Caa*, the leaves of which, after being parched at a slow fire, resemble the tea herb, and, like it, are drunk infused in boiling water. It grows spontaneously in the woods, and thrives best in a swampy soil. In form and foliage, except that the leaves are softer, it resembles the orange tree, but far exceeds it in size. Its flowers are small and white, with a calyx composed of five leaflets. The seed is very like American pepper, except that three or four small whitish oblong kernels appear beneath the skin. The boughs, which are cut off from the trees with a bill, are parched for some time on beams laid cross-wise over the fire; after which the leaves, with the smaller twigs, are spread on the ground, and beat to powder with sticks. When prepared by this less laborious method, it is called *yerba de palos*, because it is composed of leaves and leaf-stems, and their fibres, which are in a certain degree woody. An *arolla* (which is twenty-five pounds) of this herb, is sold in the forest for nearly two German florins; in the city of Asuncion, from the expense of carriage, the price is double. The *caá-miri* is sold at a double price, being prepared by the Spaniards. After parching the leaves at a slow fire, they pound them gently in a wooden mortar, taking care not to beat them too small. For the more entire they remain, the more taste and smell they possess; if pulverized very small, they lose both. *Caá-miri* signifies the small herb, being made by the Indians of the tender parts of the leaves, the leaf-stems and all the particles of wood being excluded; it is not, however, reduced to powder, like that of the Spaniards. The herb, when properly prepared, exhales a very pleasant fragrance, without the admixture of anything else; but if it be sprinkled with a little of the leaves or rind of the fruits of the *quabica miri*, the odour is doubled.

MATERIALS USED IN WRITING.

The ancient Saxons appear to have sometimes used the style without ink, when writing upon parchment or vellum; but for writing with ink, or coloured liquids, reeds or canes, and afterwards quills, were employed, and sometimes pencils made of hair. The most beautiful reeds for this purpose grew formerly in Egypt, near Crudus, a city and district in the province of Caria, in Asia Minor, and likewise in Armenia and Italy. Chardin speaks of reeds, which grew in the marshes of Persia, and are much sought after in the Levant. "Their writing pens," says he, "are made of reeds or small hard canes, of the size of the largest swan quills, which they cut and slit in the same manner as we do ours, but they give them a much longer nib." The Tartars and Indians still write with small reeds, bearing the hand exceedingly light. Pencils made of hair are used by the Chinese for their writings; they first liquify their ink, and then dip their pencils into it. The curious large capital letters used in Italy, in the decline of the Roman empire, and until the sixteenth

century, were made with hair pencils. After the invention of printing, they were drawn by the illuminators. Quills of geese, swans, pelicans, peacocks, crows, and other birds, have been long used in Europe and in this country, but the exact date of their introduction is uncertain. St. Jaidore, of Seville, who died in 636, speaks of a pen as in use in his time: "The instruments necessary for a scribe are the reed and the pen." In the same century, Aldhelm wrote a short poem on a writing pen. In the eighth century, writing pens are mentioned by Alcuin; after which period, proofs of their use occur so frequently as to place the matter beyond all doubt. In the twelfth century, Peter de Clugery, who by scholastic writers is called the *Venerable*, and who died in 1157, wrote to a friend, exhorting him "to use the pen instead of the plough, and transcribe the scriptures instead of tilling land." The use of inks, or coloured liquids, was early known among the ancients. Jeremiah, who flourished about 600 years before the Christian era, speaks of writing with ink, which then, as now, was black, though afterwards coloured inks have been occasionally used.

people about Bornholm call it *Tommiliden*; in Norway, *Peter Ronsmad*; the Germans, *Thomas Gierdet*; and we, the *Robin Red-Breast*.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PILGRIM. No. IX.

On one of the cold days of the last week, I was running along in the upper part of the city, where the houses are scattered about without any regular order, and I was glad at intervals to stop behind some habitation, in order to blow on my hands, and wrap my great coat more closely around me. Whilst thus sheltering myself from the breeze at the gable-end of a tottering old shed, whose weatherboards were so severed as to admit upon me, almost as much air as the open space. I heard the chafing of some slight substance which the wind was driving through a crack, and turning, saw a roll of soiled and smoky paper shivering in the gale, gradually projecting further from its place of confinement. "Let us see what we have here," said I to myself, and opened the dirty and crumpled scroll. "A critio, iorsooth," I exclaimed, when I had read some paragraphs in it, and one too of no ordinary modesty. The venerable ancients are hacked to pieces with no compunction by this literary Samson, with a view of more effectually elevating some modern pretenders. Are all that we revere, in our predecessors to be thus depreciated by this upstart leveller? No wonder he lived in a garret—it was the most suitable place for so bare-faced an impostor." "But fair and softly," added I, rolling up the paper, "let me trudge home and seat myself by a warm fire before I attempt to canvass this queer production. So, stuffing it in my pocket, after having held it awhile in a smart cleansing breeze, I bounded away, and was in due season at my own house beside a good fire, and snugly seated in my elbow chair, with the documents that I had found stretched out before me. This production, thought I, when I had finished the perusal of the MS., may emphatically be styled *unique*, and I will immediately copy it for the *MINERVA*, that the lucubrations of this critical giant may be embalmed for posterity. The following is a transcript of a portion of the article.

POETRY AND POETS.

The present age of English poetry surpasses both in excellence and quantity any that have preceded it. While we pay due respect to the poets of the reigns of Elizabeth, Charles, and George II. and admire their beauties, we cannot but admit that they are much diminished in value since the productions of Byron and his poetical associates have been given to the world. In former times there was less of inspiration of poetry, than at present. Less of those beautiful fancies, those bold and striking images, and of the tenderness which belongs to poetry than there is at this day. In the works of Byron, and Moore, and Campbell, and the host of their contemporaries, we find collected all that the reveries of the enthusiast, the lover, or the man of genius have ever formed, painted in the most glowing and impassioned language. But there is nothing of the kind to be found in the volumes of Dryden, Addison, or Pope. The latter, did indeed possess more imagination than the other two, yet he was miserably deficient. Dryden was distinguished for a vigour that bordered on coarseness, and Addison's chief merit was in the purity and beauty of his language. He possessed none of the soul—none of the feeling of our contemporary writers. The far-famed tragedy of *Cato*, has in it a little of the genuine poetry, if we view poetry in its proper light as the inspiration of a redundant and powerful imagination, giving voice to the feelings and passions of human nature, or describing any emotion—any thing elevated and affecting—

any thing, in a word, that appertains to the heart. Ossian was not the less a poet, because unfettered by rhyme, or Pope the more, because he wrote in verse. Poetry is a thing entirely distinct from a peculiarity of phrase. The language of the Eastern, or the Indian who is a stranger to all rule, is wonderfully poetical, and extremely beautiful. The lamentations of Jeremias in holy writ contain much of sublime poetry; yet, is there a critic of any note who will assert that their beauties are less, because they are not modelled after a particular rule, or cast into a peculiar form? The inspirations of Jeremias and Ossian are not susceptible of shackles like these. They are irresistible, and flow on as a powerful stream, leaving the canons of the rhymster at an immeasurable distance behind them.—These are poets and poets of the highest order. But shall we bestow that name on any dunces that has conned his lesson at school, and by dint of perseverance has penned an essay in rhyme, faultless, 'tis true in shape, but vapid and tiresome, and destitute as the productions of such a man necessarily must be, of all feeling, of all energy, of all fancy? To be a poet it is essential to be a man of genius; but not so to be a scholar. If we view poetry in this light, it is obvious that Cato has few pretensions to the character of a poem. If we view as poetry only its auxiliaries, the propriety and beauty of the language, the critical accuracy of the measure, and a due attention to all the rules of composition, although destitute of imagination, of tenderness, or even a coruscation of fancy, then is Cato a master-piece, and put to shame the works of Byron and Maturnin, of Lewis and Shiel. Having promised thus much to shew in what the superiority of the poets of this age, over those that have lived before them consists, it may not be amiss to point out the peculiar and characteristic beauties of some of our contemporary poets of eminence.*

The great excellence of Byron, who it is universally conceded, stands at the head of his fellow bards, consists in the strength and energy, yet tenderness of his feelings, the vigour of his mind, and the exuberance of his imagination. There is also a grandeur and maturity in his conceptions, and a colouring, forcible and glowing, yet soft and mellow in his expressions, that is seldom, if ever found, in the works of others. Whilst his poetical powers are in the perfect state just described, he exerts them on his paper with a magical effect. These are what constitute his claim to the character of a poet. Whilst he possesses all the energy of Dryden, he has none of his coarseness—whilst his language is pure as the classical elegance of Addison, there is in it, what cannot be found in Addison's productions, a *feeling* that constitutes its greatest ornament. Thus there is much of poetic beauty in *Manfred's* account of himself.

"From my youth upward,
My spirit walk'd not with the souls of men,
Nor look'd upon the earth with human eyes.
The thirst of their ambition was not mine;
The aim of their existence was not mine:—
My joys, my griefs, my passions, and my powers,
Made me a stranger—tho' I wore the form,
I had no sympathy with breathing flesh—
Nor midst the creatures of clay that girded me
Was there but one, who—but of her alone,
I bold but slight communion; and instead
My joy was in the wilderness to breathe
The difficult air of the ice-bound mountain's top,
Where the birds were not bold, nor insects wing
Filt over the herbless granite; or to plunge
Into the torrent, and to roll along
On the swift whirl of the new breaking wave
Of river-stream or ocean in their flow.
In these my early strength exulted, or
To follow through the night the moving moon,
The stars and their development, or catch
The dazzling lightnings 'till my eyes grew dim;
Or to look list'ning on the scattered leaves
While autumn winds were at their evening song,
These were my pastures, and to be alone;
For if the beings of whom I was one—
Hating to be so—crossed me in my path,
I felt myself degraded back to them—
And was all clay again," &c. &c.

Here we admire as well the singular cast of thought, the arrogant assertion of superiority, and that detail of his eccentricities, as the majestic march of the verse. The felicity of the expression alone, is

* From this sentence it would seem that our critic desired to publish, and did not, like the author of the novel called "The Pioneers," write for his own edification and amusement alone.—*The Pilgrim.*

rarely surpassed, and we are given with it a superabundance of matter. But this is by no means the best passage in that "grand drama," as it has been emphatically termed by the *Edin. Review*; one of its finest features is the description of natural scenery, but as with relation to this work, I quote from memory, I am unable to point out the different parts that are remarkable in this respect.

In *Childe Harold* we read the travels and observations of a man that has abandoned his country from a disgust created by the incompetency of ordinary pleasures to satisfy a mind of peculiar elevation. He had been accustomed to a life of vice, and awakening when it was late to a true sense of its insignificance and folly, he forsook his country. In this he was also induced by the sordidness and unfeelingness of men, and from the knowledge that there lived not one, that viewed him with affection.

"Nay, none did love him, though to hall and bower,
He gathered revellers from far and near;
He knew them flatterers from the festal hour,
The heartless parasites of present cheer."

The farewell to his native land is full of melancholy tenderness, and the description of the voyage is very pleasing. He arrives in Portugal, and traverses the orange-groves and vine-covered hills of that charming country. He depicts the beauties of the scenery with his accustomed felicity and eloquence. He enters into Spain, "renowned, romantic land," and notes the customs and the character of the people, particularly of the ladies, whom he describes in the ardent colours of a man of feeling, susceptible of female attractions, and particularly of those fascinating traits that are peculiar to the women of Spain. He wanders through Greece and Albania, and his pages are interspersed with reflections suggested by the condition of those countries. These occupy the first two cantos, at the end of which, it would seem that he had returned to his country.

We are next introduced to the bard, (who here seems to be identified with his hero,) as he is forsaken anew the land of his nativity. He begins by a beautiful apostrophe to his infant daughter, but suddenly,

"Wakening with a start,
The waters heave around him,"

and he finds his bark receding from the white cliffs of Albion. This canto conducts him through Germany and Switzerland to Geneva. In this pilgrimage he views the beauties of nature with the eye of a lover, and delineates them with the pencil of a master. He touches upon the life and character of the Gallic monarch, and draws from them a useful and sublime moral. His reflections on the fields of Maret and Waterloo, are those of a philosopher, and are dictated by the same spirit that speaks on the plains of Albueria and Talevera. The canto finishes with the subject about which it began—the daughter of the poet. He speaks the language of a father—a father that tenderly loves—a father separated from his only child, on whose image he dwells with pleasure, but which, the recollection of her distance and estrangement from him, tends to embitter. He indulges in the holy feelings of a parent, and utters aloud those feelings on the air. To speak of the fourth and last canto, would be trespassing on the time of the reader. Suffice it to say, that it possesses much merit, though less pleasing than the first and second, owing no doubt to the difference of the scenery, the latter being in the fields and woods, the valleys and rivers of nature, under the canopy of the heavens, and the former in the dwelling places of men, and among their works of art.

THE NATURALIST'S DIARY. TO BE CONTINUED MONTHLY.

FOR FEBRUARY.

Among the bracing juvenile sports of this month, skating and sliding are still

practised; sleighing parties, concerts, the theatre, and visiting, are still enjoyed. The sports of the field, the toil of the husbandman, are still locked in winter's cold embrace.

This is the last of the winter months, and all good husbandmen will make it the last month in which they may want any good thing that their farms, under judicious cultivation, may produce. Those who have neglected to prepare their seeds for spring planting, must defer it no longer. Those who have neglected to prune their fruit trees, must now do it, or next year will give an abundant crop of young shoots and useless leaves, with little or no fruit. Rub off moss and parasite plants, and make your orchards look neat and trim about their heads; do not leave them looking like lousy urchins, whose hair never felt the straitening influence of a comb. Take a strong birch broom, in a wet day, and sweep and scrub off the moss and caterpillar nests: give young trees a good scrubbing with strong soap suds; it will prevent the return of moss, and destroy the lice which often destroy the trees. Canker is another evil you must guard against. This arises from animalcula, or minute insects, which suck the juices of the bark. Tar water sometimes will destroy them; but a small quantity of corrosive sublimate, mixed with half a pint of spirits, or gin, and rubbed over the bark and on the wood, will destroy them effectually. Peach trees, that are much annoyed with worms, should be carefully examined towards the close of this month. The worms will be found a little under the surface of the ground, working their way into the bark of the roots. You may pick them out with the point of a knife. This you must do without wounding the bark. After you have destroyed as many as you can find in this way, wash the roots and trunks carefully with the above solution. Most of the peach trees, in the middle and northern states, have been destroyed by these insidious foes; they must be attacked in their hiding places; and I know of no other way of exterminating them. If you find the worms have made holes through the bark, fill the holes with tar, in which there has been a little salt and a small quantity of lime mixed. The peach and plum trees have a host of foes to contend against, and they cannot thrive without the fostering care of man. The last week in this month is the best time to prune vines, if you have any; and I have told you before that you ought to have them. Such plants as are but one year old from the cuttings, should be pruned down to one or two good buds each; always cutting about an inch above the bud, in a slanting direction; recollecting that the lowest bud towards the old wood is not reckoned as one among the good ones. Serve two year old plants in the same way, leaving two good buds to form strong shoots next year. The young shoots of the last summer's growth are the only bearing wood; that is, they send forth new shoots, which bear the fruit.

Begin to dig among your nursery trees as soon as the frost is gone. Plant cuttings of currants and gooseberries, and they will form goodly branching heads by the end of summer; and will produce fruit next year. Sow the stones of plums, peaches, nectarines, apricots, and cherries; cover them slightly, and when up, you can sift earth over and around them, to give them support; or, if they are sown in rows, draw the earth up to the plants with a hoe. If buried too deep, the seeds are apt to ferment and rot. As soon as you find the ground dry enough, sow the kernels of apples, pears, and quinces, if you neglected this in November. About the latter end of this month you may sow many sorts of hardy annual flower seeds, in borders, and other parts of the pleasure garden: such as larkspur, scarlet pea, sweet-scented and Tangier pea, dwarf wort, Venus looking-glass,

dwarf poppy, annual sunflower, oriental mallow, and many others. If the ground is dry, you may plant the lobelia polyanthus, primroses, violets, double camomile, and saxifrage. A thousand things indeed should be done as soon as the frost is gone, and the ground gets dry. The remarks here made apply more directly to the southern States, where the *MINERVA* is now extensively circulated. The month of March will find us giving directions for the middle and northern States. We wish our limits would permit a more minute essay on gardening, and the agricultural pursuits of the country. Still we shall take pleasure in contributing all in our power to promote these interesting and useful objects.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

No. XLVII. of the *MINERVA* will contain the following articles:

POPULAR TALES.—*The Spectre Bridegroom.*

THE TRAVELLER.—*Manners and Customs of the Crim Tartars.* No. II.

LITERATURE.—*The Loves of the Angels. A Poem;* by Thomas Moore.

THE DRAMA.—*London Theatre.*—*Letter of Garrick.*

BIOGRAPHY.—*Memoirs of Jane Shore.*

ARTS AND SCIENCES.—*On Sleep, Bed Rooms, Bedding, and the Siesta.* No. I.—*Ice Bergs.—Inventions for Extinguishing Fire.—Natural History, &c.*

CORRESPONDENCE.—*The Pilgrim.* No. IX. (in continuation) including a *Critique on Poetry and Poets.*

POETRY.—*"Blanche," by Salomina.*—*"Columba's Son," sung at the New Orleans Theatre, 28th January, 1823.*—*"To a Maniac Girl," by L;* with other pieces.

FLORIO.—In number 48 of the *MINERVA*, we shall commence the publication of the best poetical effusions that have already appeared from the pen of "FLORIO." The lovers of genuine poetry will thus be put in possession, in a collected form, of the choicest productions of our favourite bard, which, otherwise, might have sunk into oblivion, as he has not only abandoned the Muses, but has declined all interested interference in the publication of his poetry.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—A "Subscriber" would do well to go to school, and learn *orthography*, before he arrogates the character of a critic.

The lines "to H. S. S." are postponed. We cannot insert "Nordlaw to S. B. of Brooklyn," to the exclusion of more meritorious productions.

GLEANER, RECORD, ENIGMAS, CHRONOLOGY.

THE RECORD.

A thing of Shreds and Patches!—HAMLET.

The Canal Commissioners have reported in favour of constructing a basin at the termination of the Canal at Albany, which will cost about 100,000 dollars. It is to be so constructed as to enable transhipments to be made between canal and river craft, without the cost and delay of cartage and storage.

Mr. Poinsett, has transmitted to Charleston a valuable collection of minerals, collected by him while in Mexico.

It is said the author of the *Spy* has another work nearly ready for the press, to be called "The Pilot—a Tale of the Sea."

Another American tale, from the Baltimore press, is announced.

The life of James Otis, by Mr. Tudor, of Boston, has lately been issued from the press.

MARRIED,

The Rev. Charles Hyde to Miss Mary Ludlow. Mr. Joseph Green to Miss Sarah Milner. Mr. Benjamin Clapp to Miss Mary C. Behn. Mr. Peter Carter to Miss Jane Cruger. Mr. Edwin Jesup to Miss Mary Ann Bryden. Mr. Daniel Northrop to Miss Nancy Wilmet. Mr. Jonas Platt Brush to Miss Caroline Jane Bartow.

MED,

Mr. Robert Morrell, aged 34 years. Mr. William G. Hoyt, aged 28 years. Miss Jane North, in the 50th year of her age. Mr. Daniel Stead, aged 30 years. Mr. Peter R. Post, in the 36th year of his age. Jeremiah Mullough, Esq. aged 67 years. Mr. James Hall, aged 41.

POETRY.

"It is the gift of POETRY to hallow every place in which it moves; to breathe round nature an odour more exquisite than the perfume of the rose, and to shed over it a tint more magical than the blush of morning."

For the Minerva.

RETROSPECTION.

A MIDNIGHT THOUGHT.

The hour invites the meditative mind
To pensive thought, and contemplation grave;
All the pursuits of men are stayed, and sleep
Asserts her ancient empire o'er the sense.
In the same sweet oblivion of care
Thousands are now forgetting every trace
Of the afflictions of the vanish'd day,
And the same busy hopes are moulderling now
In many a brain that slumbers from its ills,
Like visions of delight and happiness,
Of future joys to pay the harass'd soul
For present tribulation; all without
Is calm and peaceful. Snowy flakes descend
By winds undriven, to the face of earth,
As silent and as soft as on the wave.
The moonlight sleeps, in summer's calmest night;
As though Nature herself, tired with the day;
And jar, and bustle of the day's employ,
Had hush'd the tempest and the storm to sleep;
The hum of business, and the laugh of mirth,
The joyous gaiety of gladsome youth
In lively converse; and the wilder shriek
Of bacchanal carousing through the streets,
Is midnight revelry, and e'en the tread
Of solitary passenger, has ceased
To strike upon the ear of him who wakes
At this lone hour of midnight and repose,
And freed from study's thralldom, now would range,
O'er Fancy's wide domain, or o'er the scene
Of former years, with retrospective view,
Solemn and pensivo cast the glance of thought.

O who so young, but memory will oft,
And the phantoms of departed days,
Which at her touch rise glowing to the sight
In colours almost tangible, and forms
That seem to have such real hue of beauty,
That we clasp them to our souls, and taste
The freshness of their living charms again;
Bring up such phantasies of fearful shape,
Of dreadful refection and of horror,
That sudden from the scene our thoughts withdraw
With start convulsive, and our eyelids close
Forsooth upon the hated imagery?
Sometimes they come embodied so in form
That almost breathe their malice and their hate,
And read with living fangs the heart again,
That recollection cannot tear apart
The cords which bind these diverse thoughts in one.
Then could we almost wish the power was given
To wipe all trace of memory from the brain,
To let the bygone years unnoticed lie,
And sleep in darkness and forgetfulness,
And in imagination's fairy world
Fix all our hopes of happiness.

But ere
The half-formed wish had left the realms of thought,
And utter'd forth in words its frantic will,
The cherish'd image of some long-lost scene
Of youthful rapture: of some tender thought,
That in our former days held potent sway,
And undisputed mastery o'er the breast
Of some dear one whose friendship was our joy,
Our pride and consolation, comes across
The stirring soul, and makes us rather bear
The burden of ten thousand ills, than lose
One thought, entwined so closely with the heart.
O there are visions of the vanish'd years,
Which in an hour like this, will fit before
The eye of memory: not shadowed forth
In half distinguishable forms of dream;
But in the glow of life and actual being,
That those who loved us and whom we have loved,
The friend on whom the grave has closed, and he
Who lives indeed, but is to friendship dead,
With wonted look of love and open arms,
As of affection yet unchanged, approach,
And seem to court again the fond embrace.
The dead shake off th' habiliments of death,
Burst from the charnel-house, and leave awhile
The confines of the tomb, to walk the earth,
To mix with living men; and having shed
A transient gleam of parted joys, and left
A bright, though brief, memento of the past,
Die swiftly to their shrouds and sleep again.

L. R. S. N.

T. S. New-York, Feb. 14th, 1823.

For the Minerva.

THE PAST YEAR.

"L'autre qui partage les jours"
The star that rules the day,
And lights for us the plain,
Has travell'd now his wonted way,
And speeds his course again.

How swift has roll'd the year,
Irrevocably past!
Alas! and that which now is here,
Will roll away as fast.

To Time must all things bow;
From him there's nought can save;
And of the moment which is now,
The next still proves the grave.

The fairest days that beam,
Arise but to descend;
Years that with richest plenty team,
Commence that they may end.

Man vainly builds the tower
T' immortalize his name;
The pride that rears it has not power
To give it endless fame.

All mortals the same law
Condemns to the same doom;
The moment we our breath first draw,
Is one step towards the tomb.

Why then let cares alloy
My joys in this brief space?
Why should I lose the passing day,
For that which is to pass?

The instant which is near,
May see man's final fate;
Then let us live for that now here,
And not the next await.

How pitiable the man,
Who, am'rous of success,
Incessant toils through life's short span,
In search of happiness!

Wastes his best years to brood
O'er visionary schemes,
And sacrifices present good
To vain and doubtful dreams!

Fools! to a tiresome round
Of cares your souls you give,
And life is gone ere you have found
The moment when to live.

The error you pursue,
Yields no delight to me;
My life's the instant now in view,
Not that I'm yet to see.

The days which once were here
I nor regret nor plain;
I look not with desire or fear,
To those days with pain.

Wisely let us enjoy
The good within our grasp,
Mindful lest, eager, we destroy
The pleasures we would clasp.

The past is ever gone;
The future ne'er may be:
Tis o'er the present time alone
That man has mastery.

LAURENCE.

For the Minerva.

TO —.

No, no! the day is not gone by,
Thy day of fond romance:
Its influence breathes in every sigh,
And glows in every glance.

No, fond enthusiast—Time must shed
His honours o'er thy brow,
Ere those romantic dreams are fled
Which fill thy fancy now.

Dreams of unchanging love and truth,
Of friendship, pure as warm,
Which fill the glowing soul of youth,
Bewildering while they charm.

Enthusiast! think I would not break
Thy pictured dream of bliss,
Ah! who could wish to be awake
In such a world as this.

H.

THE ZEPHYR AND FLOWER.

Snow trembled down
From the winter's crown,
And cover'd this planet with lightness:
The Zephyr arose
In fantastical blows,
And enchantingly frolic'd o'er whiteness.

He sought for the bower
Of his lady-like flower,
Which at night he had left with his blessing;
He blew all his air
On the snow for his fair,
But 'twas crisp, and consistence possessing.

To the moon he flew,
But her reign was now;
To the stars—and related his story;
But they shone in the cold,
And instinctively roll'd
Their high anthems to wisdom and glory.

Through the lucid space
He continued his race,
For the sun to shine warmly and brightly;
But the clouds overspread
That white innocent bed,
Where his lady-like flower had slept nightly.

He wander'd in wo,
Round the bower below,
And faithfully, tenderly hover'd;
He whisper'd to boughs
Without leaves, of his bower,
For his lady so suddenly cover'd.

They shook their hoar heads
O'er their natural beds,
But their vestures were chilly and frozen;
And the Zephyr remaining,
Renew'd his complaining,
At the loss of his lovely and chosen.

The Sun, as it seem'd,
Heard the prayer, which he deserv'd
An example of summer affection:
He shot down his light
With fulgurancy bright,
And the snow sank to water's complexion.

O! the rapt'rous delight
Of this exquisite sight,
Which these lovers should feel at their meeting:

The Zephyr had sped,—
But his lady was dead!
And he died, her existence entreating!

Thus true loves, we know,
In this valley below,
Like the flower and the zephyr united,
By misfortunes are slain,
Ere the bridal they gain,
But their mem'ry shall never be blighted!

Epigram.

Written in a young lady's "Thomson's Seasons."

I found her fair as Spring—my heart approved—
Summer—more and more I loved—
Blushing as Autumn—all my soul was fired—
But cold as Winter—and my hopes expired.

ENIGMAS.

And justly the wise man thus preach'd to us all,
Despite not the value of things that are small."

Answers to Puzzles in our last.

RIDDLE.
The sun's reflecting golden ray,
After a heavy shower,
A beauteous Iris will display—
It also is a FLOWER.

CHARADES.

I.
A Rebel is surely devoid of all shame;
A Lion's an animal bold;
And Rebellion's attended with censure and blame,
Yet lately has spread thirty-fold.

II.
To Whirl, is a circular motion;
A Pool is a body of water;
And Whirlpool resides in the ocean.
And is often as fatal as slaughter.

NEW CHARADES.

I.
My first is the child of Deceit,
The sister of Plan and Deception;
My second's an adjective neat,
Its degree I've no fancy to mention:
My whole I may freely compare
To the delicate hue of the snow;
The flowers of Deceit ne'er grow there,
And the buds of Design never blow.

II.
My first has been known to insure
Both pleasure and pain, throughout life;
When an evil—alas! there's no cure—
'Tis connected with husband and wife.

My second resides in the earth,
Is treated with scorn and disgrace;
My whole in the skin has its birth,
And it sometimes is seen in the face.

III.

My first is two-fourths of what's potent and strong,
My second is merely a vis;
As my whole was ne'er meant to express what was long,
Curthilang can never surprise.

CHRONOLOGY.

The Christian Era.

607 Boniface chosen Pope, obtained from Phocas an acknowledgment of his primacy.
The pantheon, a temple built by Agrippa, under Augustus, in honour of Jupiter and all the gods, was consecrated to the true God, under the invocation of the Blessed Virgin and all the Saints.
608 Chosroes took Armenia, Cappadocia, Galatia, and Paphlagonia.
609 Revolt of the Jews at Antioch, who put to death Anastasius the bishop.
610 The Persians, masters of Assanea and Edessa, penetrated as far as Antioch.
— Heraclius, with a powerful army from Africa, dethroned and killed Phocas, and crowned Emperor.
— The Persians withdrew, with great booty, and many prisoners.
611 The Empress Eudoxia being delivered of a son, died soon after. A woman was burnt alive for having spit by accident on her bier.
612 Sisebut, an excellent prince, chosen king of the Visigoths, in Spain.
— The Saracens made an incursion on the Roman territory, and pillaged Syria with fire and sword.
— Beginning of the preaching of Mahomet, then above 40 years of age.
— Theodobert, king of the French, vanquished, shut up in a convent, and afterwards put to death by his brother Thierry.
613 Death of Thierry. Clotaire II. sole king of France, caused Brunhaut to be dragged at the tail of a wild horse, for being the cause of the death of ten kings.
614 Damascus taken by the Persians. Heraclius sued for peace. His Ambassadors returned without an answer.
615 The Persians overran Egypt, took Alexandria, and penetrated into Lybra.
616 Death of Agilulphus, King of the Lombards. His son Adaloald succeeded.
617 Heraclius sued again for peace, which Chosroes should grant only on condition that the Romans should forsake Christianity and worship the sun.
618 The Avari pillaged the environs of Constantinople.
— Era of the Dynasty of Tam, in China.
619 The Persians laid waste Asia Minor, entered into Galatia, took Ancyra, and advanced as far as Chaledon.
620 The Emperor Heraclius made peace with the Avars; continued the war with Persia; borrowed the gold and silver from the churches, and struck coin of the sacred vessels to carry on the war.
621 Heraclius marched against the Persians. One of their generals surrendered, embraced Christianity, and afterwards suffered martyrdom at Edessa.
— Heraclius joined by some Turks or Huns, arrived on the borders of Armenia, and defeated a corps of Persian cavalry.
622 The Emperor entered Persia, pillaged the low country, and took the cities. Chosroes fled. Heraclius pursued him as far as Media, fixed his head-quarters in Albania, and took more than 50,000 prisoners.
— Mahomet's flight from Mecca to Medina, called by the Arabians the *Hegira*, whence they date their annals.
623 Heraclius pursued the Persian army. The Huns or Turks withdrew to their own country Scythia. The Emperor retreated; the Persians followed him, but were defeated.
— The Romans, hitherto masters of part of Spain, driven out of it by Suintila, King of the Visigoths.
624 Heraclius crossed the Euphrates, and after repeated success, quartered in Sebastae, in Cappadocia.
625 Edwin, King of Northumberland, embraced Christianity, and founded the See of York, of which Paulinus was the first bishop.
626 Heraclius continued the war with Persia. Clotaire II. assumed his son Dagobert as partner of his throne.
— The Lombards expelled Adaloald in his stead.
627 Heraclius pursued Chosroes as far as Seleucia, beyond the Tigris. The king, falling sick, wished to have his youngest son crowned. Tiros, the eldest, caused all his brothers, and his father, to be put to death; made peace with the Empire.
— Heraclius returned in triumph to Constantinople.
— Death of Clotaire II. who was succeeded by his son Dagobert. Pepin, the elder, being mayor of the place.
629 Mahomet seized Mecca, and afterwards almost all Arabia.
631 The state of Toulouse united to France. Suintila, King of the Visigoths in Spain, being deposed, Sisenando reigned in his stead.

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